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Message Text

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73
ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-10 SR-02 ORM-01 FDRE-00 AID-05

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /081 W
---------- 072841
R 101316Z APR 75
FM AMCONSUL ASMARA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3312
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
CINCUSNAVEUR
COMNAVTELCOM
USCINCEUR
COMIDEASTFOR
NAVCOMMUNIT ASMARA
NAVCOMMSTA NEA MAKRI
DIRNSA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L ASMARA 0401

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, SWEL, ET
SUBJECT: ERITREA - CALL ON MARTIAL LAW ADMINISTRATOR

1. ON THE MORNING OF 10 APRIL I CALLED ON BG GETACHEW NADEW, MARTIAL LAW ADMINISTRATOR IN ERITREA, ACCOMPANIED BY CONSOFF. I TOLD GETACHEW I HAD RECENTLY BEEN IN ADDIS ABABA FOR CONSULTATIONS WITH OUR NEW AMBASSADOR, WHOSE REGARDS I CONVEYED. REMINDING GETACHEW OF OUR EARLIER CONVERSATION (ASMARA 0348) AT THE AIRPORT WHEN HE WAS DEPARTING FOR ADDIS ABABA, I ASKED HIM WHAT STEPS HAD BEEN DECIDED ON TO HELP ASMARA TO RETURN TO NORMAL. GETACHEW CHOSE TO RESPOND ONLY WITH THE STANDARD EPMG TIRADE AGAINST THE "DISIDENTS" BACKED BY THE ARABS", WHO HAD DISTURBED THE PEACE. HE ASSURED ME THAT THE PEOPLE OF ASMARA, AND ERITREA, WANT ONLY THE PEACE AND UNITY WHICH THE "DISSIDENTS" ARE TRYING TO DISRUPT.

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2. I THEN TOLD GETACHEW THAT ALONG WITH MANY OTHER COUNTRIES,

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PARTICULARLY OTHER AFRICAN COUNTRIES, WE ARE CONCERNED AT THE SUFFERING OF THE INNOCENT CONSEQUENT IN THE DISTURBANCES HERE, AND WANT TO HELP IF HELP IS NEEDED, EITHER DIRECTLY OR THROUGH INTERNATIONAL RELIEF ORGANIZATIONS. GETACHEW ASSERTED UNEQUIVOCALLY THAT, TO THE EXTENT THAT THERE IS A RELIEF PROBLEM, HIS ADMINISTRATION CAN COPE WITH IT. IF IN THE FUTURE HELP IS NEEDED, HE WILL CALL ON US AS THE TRADITIONAL HELPER OF THE ETHIOPIAN PEOPLE. HE DID OBSERVE THAT THE PRINCIPAL PROBLEM FACING HIS ADMINISTRATION IN THE DISTRIBUTION OF RELIEF SUPPLIES IS THE NECESSITY OF KEEPING THEM OUT OF THE HANDS OF THE "DISSIDENTS".

3. COMMENT: GETACHEW'S PRESENT UNWILLINGNESS TO DISCUSS THE CURRENT SITUATION IN ANYTHING OTHER THAN EPMG PROPAGANDA TERMS DEMONSTRATES ONCE AGAIN THE DETERMINATION OF THE EPMG TO DENY KNOWLEDGE OF ERITREAN DEVELOPMENTS TO OUTSIDERS. THE PREOCCUPATION OF THE AUTHORITIES WITH DENYING RELIEF SUPPLIES TO THE INSURGENTS RATHER THAN MEETING THE NEED THAT DOES EXIST SUGGESTS THAT ANY EPMG SPONSORED RELIEF PROGRAM WILL CONTINUE TO BE INEFFECTIVE.
SHERRY

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